A24 PALM STAR
© 2018 Hereditary Film Productions, LLC

PG12

★★★★★

THE PINNACLE OF MODERN HORROR.
A FRIGHTENING EXPERIENCE THAT WILL DRIVE YOU CRAZY.
THERE'S NO ESCAPING IT.

USA TODAY

★★★★★

A NEW GENERATION OF "EXORCIST,"
BUT WITH EVEN MORE CONFUSION

Time Out

★★★★★

KUBRICKIAN HORROR
AND UNBRIDLED EXCITEMENT.

THRILLIST

★★★★★

A MASTERPIECE THAT OVERTURNED THE
CONVENTIONAL WISDOM OF HORROR

THE PLAYLIST

(SUPER SCARY) THE PI

THE MASTERPIECE HORROR THAT SCHOCKED AMERICA WI

NNACLE OF HORROR

TH ITS TRAUMATIC FEAR HAS FINALLY ARRIVED IN JAPAN.

The "perfect nightmare"

A meticulously woven web of terrify

This horror film, which was highly praised by critics at this year's Sundance Film Festival as "a masterpiece that overturns the conventional wisdom of horror" and "the pinnacle of modern horror," shocked the whole of the United States and is finally being released in Japan. Following the death of Ellen, the family head, the surviving family members are faced with a fate more cruel than death and unimaginable terror.

that froze the whole of America

ying traps. You're not even allowed to blink until the "finale."

The director and screenwriter is Ari Aster, whose feature film directorial debut is this one. The light passing across the screen, the dreams you have in the middle of the night, the letters written on the walls of the house... the genius idea and direction, the well-calculated script in which every scene foreshadows the horror of the last scene, and the extraordinary level of perfection have set a new standard for horror movies.

The film stars Toni Collette from "The Sixth Sense." Her eerie performance is sure to get her a nomination for the Oscar for Best Actress next year. The film is produced by A24, the much talked-about film studio that produced "Moonlight," which won the Academy Award for Best Picture last year, and has released a string of popular films, including "Lady Bird."

S T O R Y

Following the death of his grandmother,

A fate more cruel than death,

An unimaginable horror strikes the family.

Ellen, the grandmother of the Graham family, dies. Her daughter Annie has mixed feelings of love and hate for her mother due to past events, but she holds a solemn funeral with her family. In the box containing Ellen's belongings, there is a note that reads, "Don't hate me."

Annie, her husband Stephen, their high school-aged son Peter, and their socially awkward daughter Charlie try to overcome the loss of their family, but strange events occur frequently in the Graham household. Mysterious lights flash through the rooms, someone can be heard talking, there is a presence in the darkness...

Then the worst happens, the family falls apart beyond repair, and unimaginable horrors befall them. What is the Graham family's secret?

This is a family story. It will be your eternal trauma.

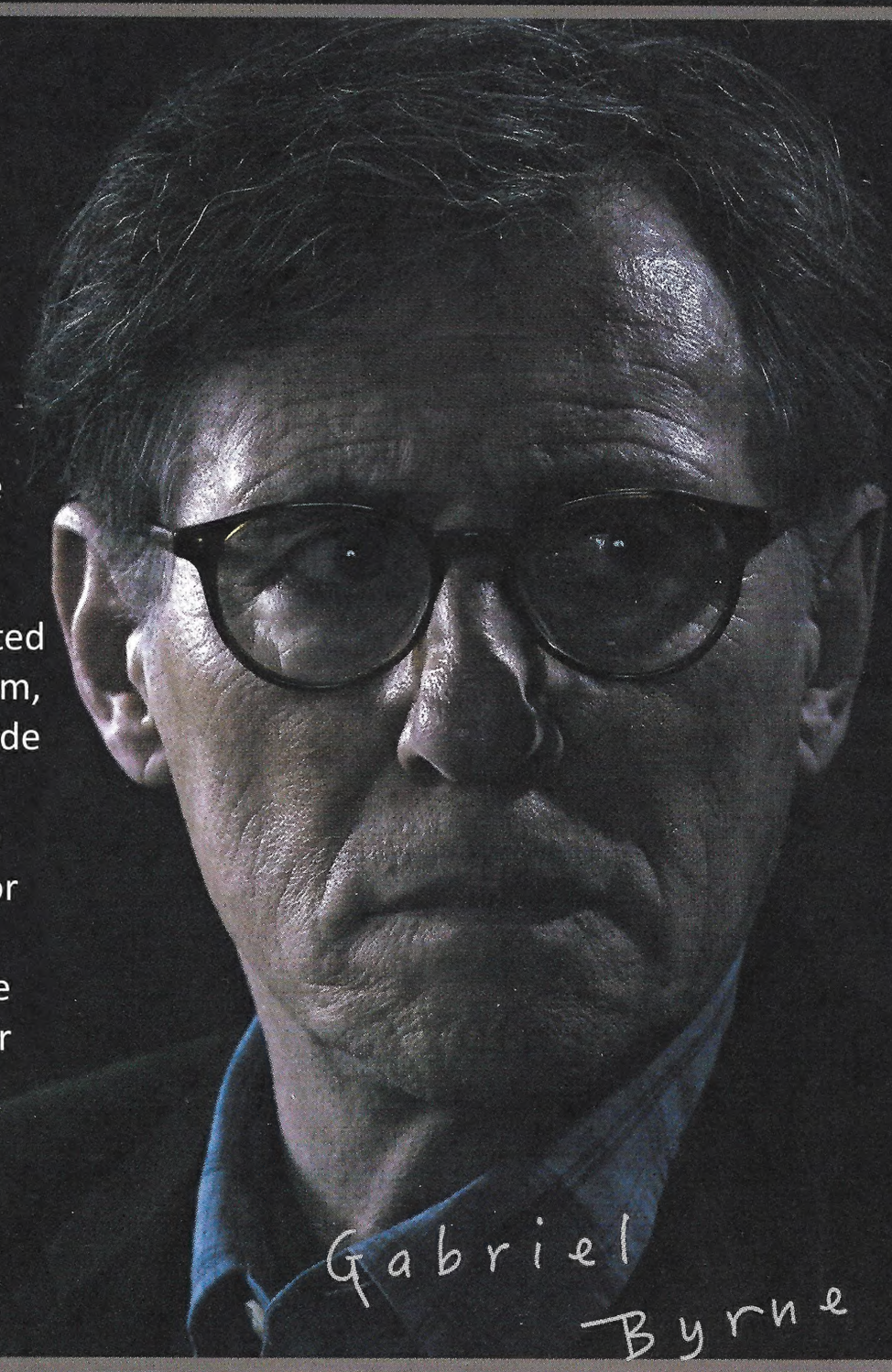
CAST PROFILE

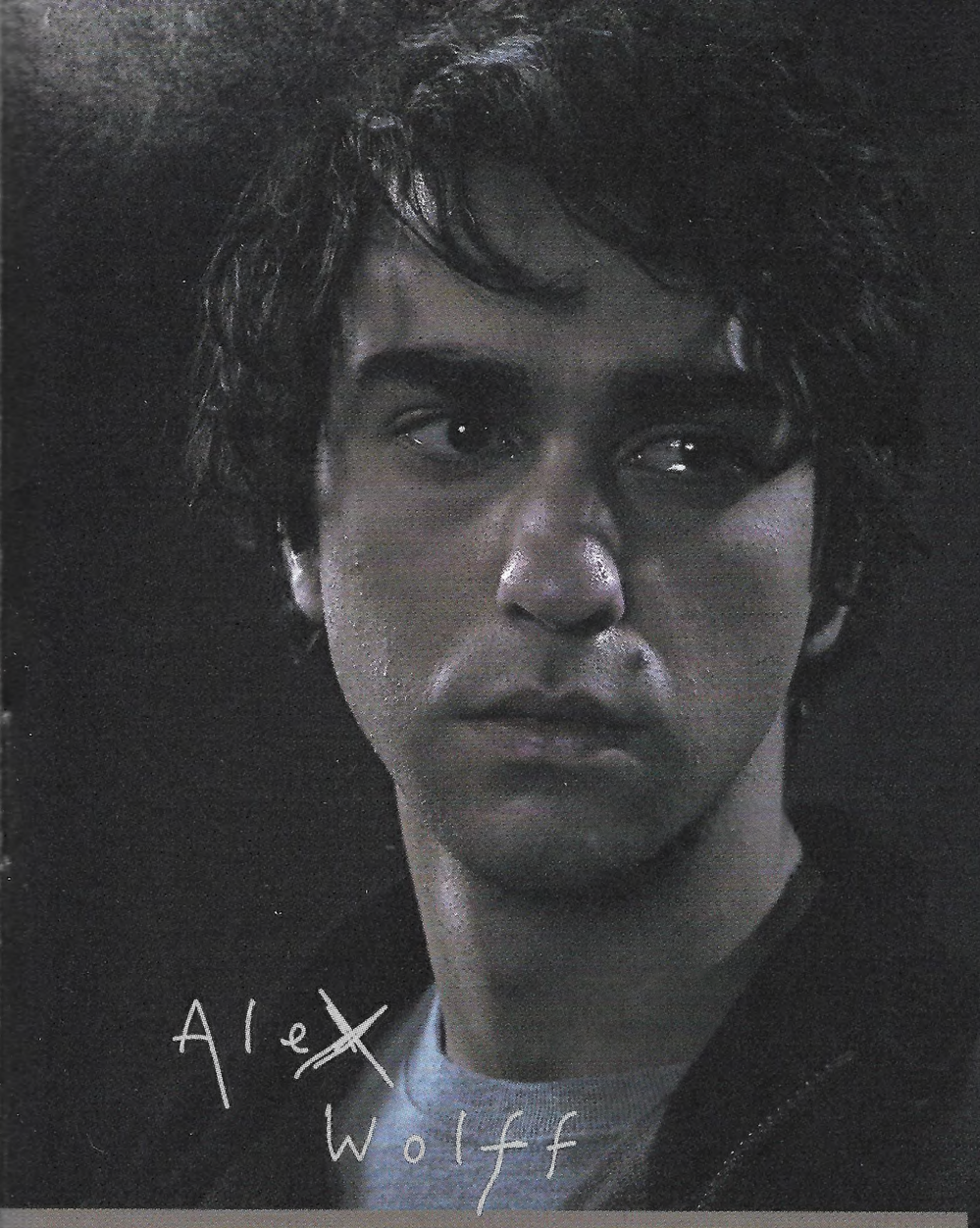
Toni Collette (Annie Graham)

Born in New South Wales, Australia in 1972. After graduating from the Australian National Academy of Dramatic Arts, she made her film debut in The White President (1991, directed by Mark Joffe). Her stunning performance as the protagonist Muriel in Muriel's Wedding (1994, directed by P.J. Hogan) left a strong impression on movie fans around the world, and she was nominated for a Golden Globe Award, attracting attention. She then was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Supporting Actress in The Sixth Sense (1999, directed by M. Night Shyamalan). She also appeared in the smash hit Little Miss Sunshine (2006), directed by Valerie Faris and Jonathan Dayton, which was nominated for the Academy Award for Best Picture, and was nominated for both a Golden Globe Award and a BAFTA Award, and won the Screen Actors Guild Award for Best Actress. Recently, she has won a Golden Globe and an Emmy Award for her role as the lead character with dissociative identity disorder in the TV series "United States of Tara" (2009-), now in its fourth season. His other film appearances include Velvet Goldmine (1998, directed by Todd Haynes), About a Boy (2002, directed by Paul & Chris Weitz), The Hours (2002, directed by Stephen Daldry), In Her Shoes (2005, directed by Curtis Hanson), Tsunami (2006, directed by Baharat Nalluri), the animated film Mary & Max (2008, directed by Adam Elliott), Hitchcock (2012, directed by Sacha Gervasi), 2013 (directed by Nicole Holofcener), Where Is Happiness? (2014, directed by Peter Chelsom) and The One and Only (2015, directed by Catherine Hardwicke). Her latest works include "xXx: Return of Xander Cage" (2017/directed by D.J. Caruso), in which she co-stars with Vin Diesel, "Unlocked" (2017/directed by Michael Apted), "500 Pages" (2017/directed by Ben Lewin), "The Yellow Birds" (2016/directed by Amanda Staehle), "Fun Mom Dinner" (2017/directed by Alicia Jones), and the Netflix original "Velvet Buzzsaw" (2018/directed by Dan Gilroy).

Gabriel Byrne (Steve Graham)

Born in Dublin, Ireland in 1950. While working as a teacher he decided to become an actor, and made his film debut at the age of 29 in Excalibur (1981) directed by John Boorman. He has appeared in over 60 feature films, including Miller's Crossing (1990/directed by Joel Coen), The Usual Suspects (1995/directed by Bryan Singer), The Legend of the White Horse (1992/directed by Mike Newell), Little Women (1994/directed by Gillian Armstrong), Dead Man (1995/directed by Jim Jarmusch), End of Violence (1997/directed by Wim Wenders), The Man in the Iron Mask (1998/directed by Randall Wallace), and The 33 (2015/directed by Patricia Riggen). His film, The Mother (2015, directed by Joachim Trier), in which he starred alongside Isabelle Huppert, was selected for the 2015 Cannes Film Festival. He has also worked on Broadway, receiving a Tony Award nomination for Eugene O'Neill's A Moon for the Misbegotten and an Outer Critics Circle Award for A Touch of the Poet. His most recent Broadway performance was in Long Day's Journey Into Night, for which he was again nominated for a Tony. He also won a Golden Globe and was twice nominated for a Meme Award for his role as Dr. Paul Weston in the HBO drama In Treatment (2008).





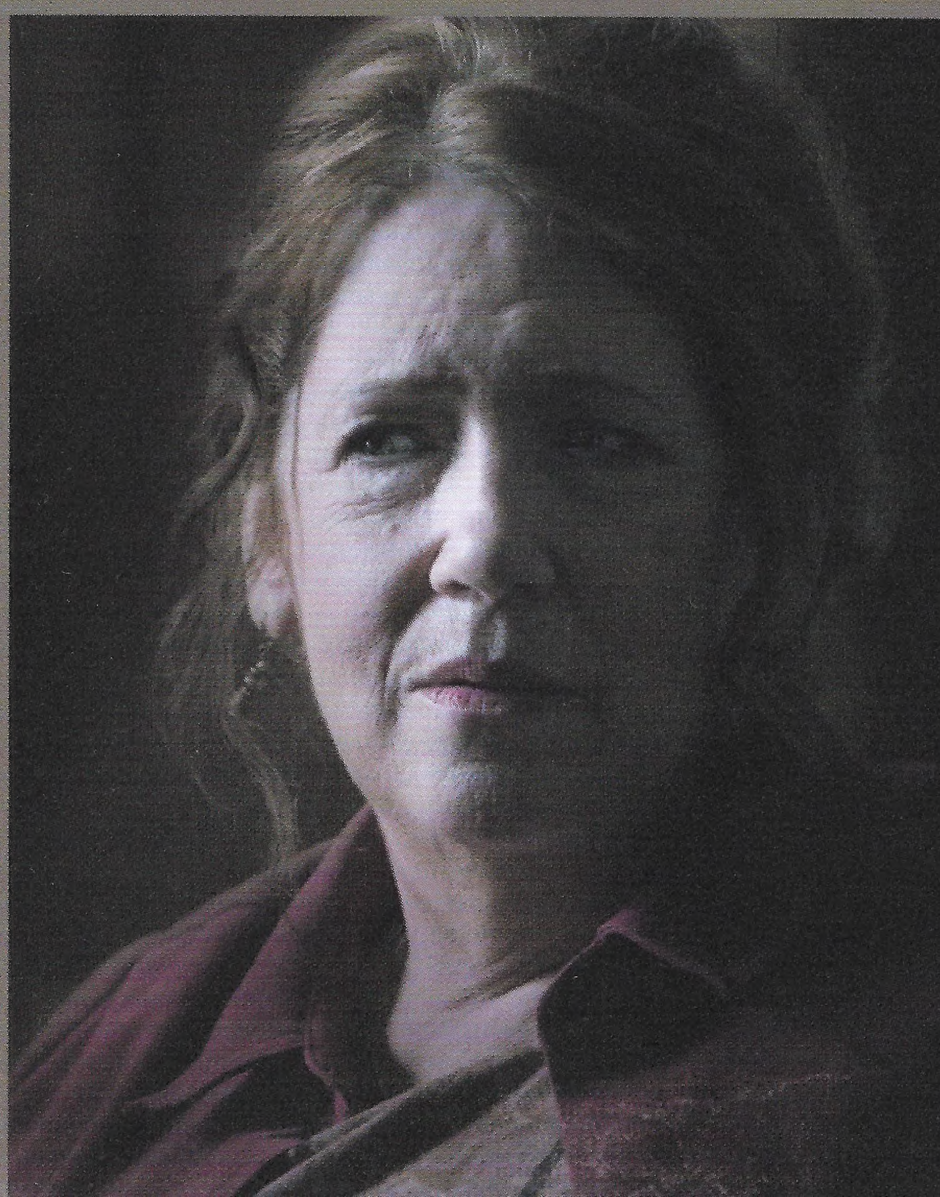
Alex Wolff (Peter Graham)

Born in New York, USA in 1997, he is one of the most promising young actors in Hollywood. In 2016, he was selected for The Hollywood Reporter's Next Gen Rising Stars list. His major works include "Breaking the Elite" (2013/directed by Billy Kent), for which he won the Best Actor Award at the Brooklyn International Film Festival, "Sneak Peak" (2015/directed by James Sudwith), "Patriot's Day" (2016/directed by Peter Berg), and the Netflix original "The End of School" (2018/directed by Olivia Milch). He also voiced Riku, the younger brother of the heroine Umi Matsuzaki, in the English dubbed version of Studio Ghibli's animated feature film "From Up on Poppy Hill" (2011). In "Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle" (2017/directed by Jake Kasdan), he co-starred with Dwayne Johnson and attracted a lot of attention, and his performance in "The House of Tomorrow" (2017/directed by Peter Livolsi) was praised by The Hollywood Reporter as "an incredible performance, with an exquisite mix of adolescent self-awakening, fearlessness and vulnerability." Upcoming works include "Stella's Last Weekend" (2018/directed by Polly Draper), in which he co-stars with his brother Nat Wolff.

Milly Shapiro (Charlie Graham)

She was born in Tampa, Florida, USA in 2002. In 2013, she played the lead role of Matilda in the Broadway musical Matilda, for which she won a Tony Award and was also nominated for a Grammy. Other stage appearances include the role of Sally in the off-Broadway production You're a Good Man and Charlie Brown at the Duke of York Theatre. She has also released numerous CDs as a singer with her sister Abigail Shapiro. Her feature film debut is Hereditary. In addition to her work as an actress and singer, she is active in the national NO BULLY campaign and frequently participates in movements to encourage and protect children.

Milly
Shapiro

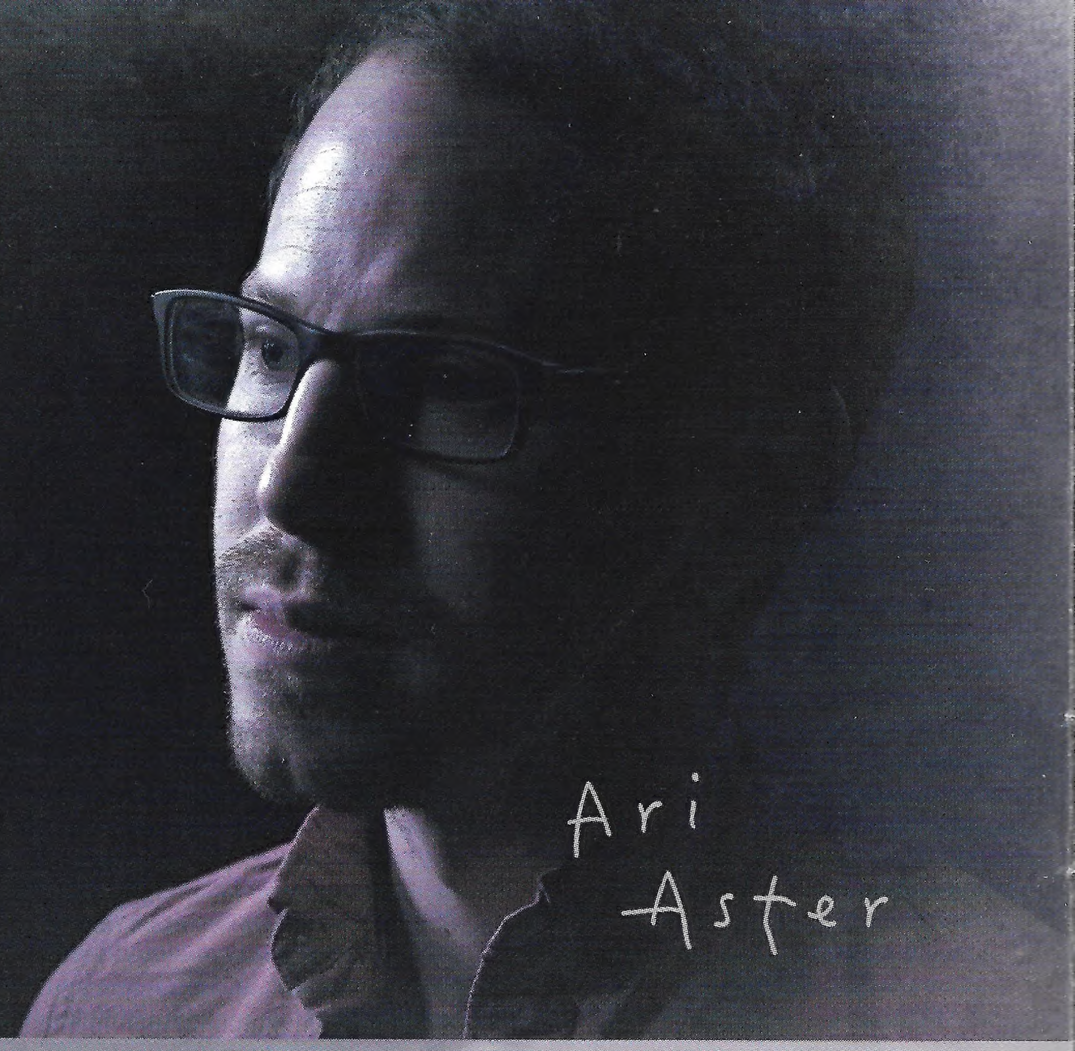


Ann Down (Joan)

Born in Holyoke, Massachusetts, USA in 1956. In 2012, she won the National Board of Review Award for Best Supporting Actress for her role in Compliance. Her major works include Side Effects (2013, directed by Steven Soderbergh), Strange Stories (2014, directed by Theodore Melfi), It's a Wonderful Life (2016, directed by David Frankel), and The Truth About Fantastic Beasts (2016, directed by Matt Ross). She has also appeared in many television dramas, and won an Emmy Award for Best Supporting Actress in a Drama Series for The Handmaid's Tale (2017). Upcoming films include A Kid Like Jake (2018, directed by Silas Howard) and American Animals (2018, directed by Bart Layton).

Ann
Down

DIRECTOR PROFILE



Ari Aster (Writer & Director)

He received his MFA from the American Film Institute (AFI). He has written and directed several short films, including The Strange Thing About the Johnsons (2011), Munchausen (2013), and Basically (2014). These films have screened at the New York Film Festival, Fantastic Fest, and Slamdance Film Festival. This is his feature film debut.

Pawel Pogorzelski

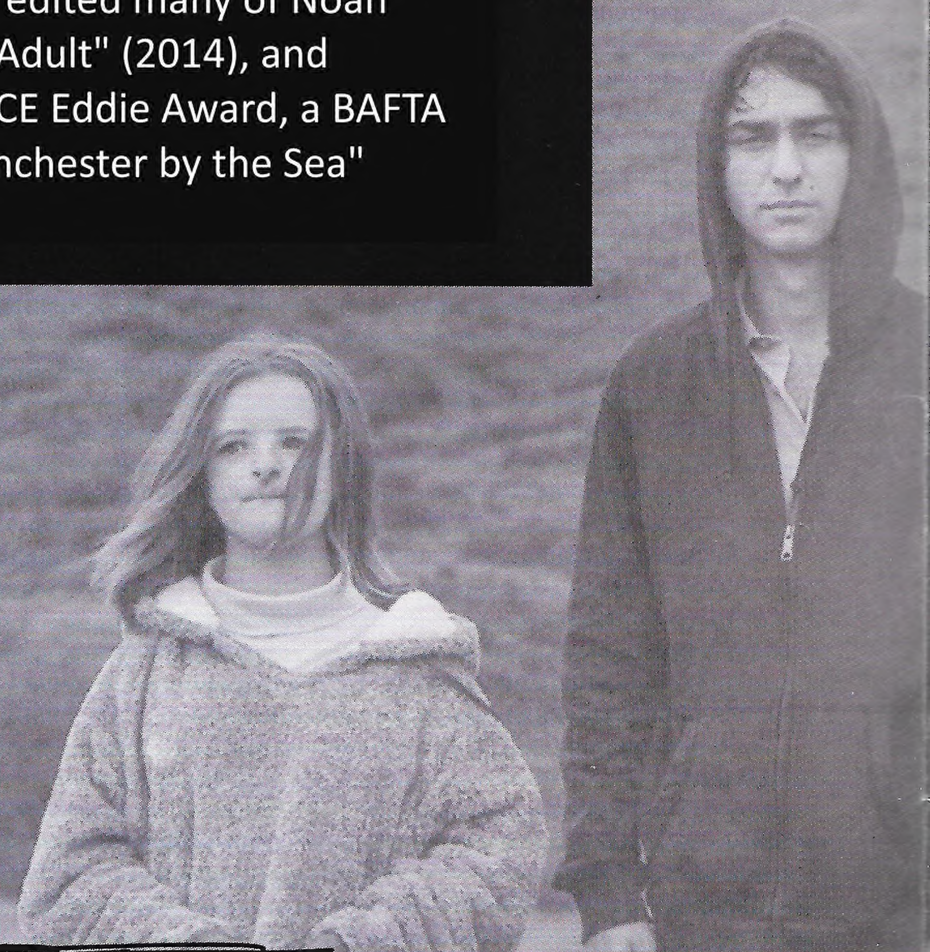
Pawel Pogorzelski (Director of Photography)

In 2010, he received his master's degree from the American Film Institute's Cinematography Program with five student awards. He then worked on the film "Parade of Lovers" (2011, directed by Francis Lawrence) under the direction of one of his mentors, Rodrigo Prieto (AMC member, ASC (American Society of Cinematographers) member). In addition to film, he currently shoots numerous commercials for companies such as McDonald's, Adidas, and Honda.

Jennifer Lame (Editor)

Jennifer Lame

After apprenticing on films such as "7:58 That Saturday" (2007/directed by Sidney Lumet) and "The Lovely Bones" (2009/directed by Peter Jackson), he worked on various film and television productions as an assistant editor. He then edited many of Noah Baumbach's films, including "Frances Ha" (2012), "The Young Adult" (2014), and "Mistresses America" (2015). He was also nominated for an ACE Eddie Award, a BAFTA Award, and an Independent Spirit Award for his work on "Manchester by the Sea" (2016/directed by Kenneth Lonergan).



Colin Stetson

Colin Stetson (Music)

An avant-garde saxophonist known for his collaborations with such renowned artists as Tom Waits, Arcade Fire, Bon Iver, and TV on the Radio, he is highly regarded for his mastery of virtuosity. He has performed at world-renowned music festivals such as SXSW, solidifying his popularity around the world.

Steve Newburn (Miniature model, special effects makeup)

He has worked on visual effects for "Team America: World Police" (2004, directed by Trey Parker), Christopher Nolan's "Inception" (2010), "The Dark Knight Rises" (2012), and "The Mummy" (2017, directed by Alex Kurtzman). He has also worked on special effects for "Resident Evil: Afterlife" (2010, directed by Paul W.S. Anderson) and "Pacific Rim" (2013, directed by Guillermo del Toro), as well as special makeup for "Suicide Squad" (2016, directed by David Ayer), the drama series "Star Trek: Discovery," and "12 Monkeys."

Steve Newburn

Interview with Director Ari Aster

I n t e r v i e w

Q. Apparently the idea for this film was inspired by a tragedy that happened to the director's own family. Please tell us how you came to complete it as a horror film.

"Horror movies are a genre that can express a variety of themes.

I think horror is a genre that can make use of any theme. I wanted to make a film about the misfortune and trauma of losing a family member. About the huge impact that misfortune has on a family. In recent years, most films have been about how misfortune strengthens family ties, and I think that's true, but it's also true that there are people who have misfortune and can't recover from it. I wanted to make a film about the latter. And by making it a horror genre, I can add misery to the story and get the possibility of a wider audience. Above all, horror requires catharsis. No matter how horrible it is, it's a pleasure in a horror film.

Q. Can you tell me about the casting?

"Toni Collette and Gabriel Byrne are great actors. There was no reason not to offer them the role. As expected, their performances were outstanding. To cast Peter and Charlie, we held auditions. I met them both in person and had them perform, and I was blown away by their acting ability. Alex Wolf's performance at the audition was indescribable; it was too good to refuse. Milly Shapiro also came to audition. I was so relieved when we chose her. She is an incredible actor who gained experience on Broadway and won a Tony Award at the age of 10."

Q. Please tell us about the location in Utah where this shoot took place.

"It was very remote. The original script had it snowbound, but the schedule shifted and we didn't get to shoot in the snow. The Graham home set could have been built anywhere but Utah, but the scenery was amazing and the crew was great. And the tax exemption rate for filming there was also a reason to go to Utah."

Q. The family relationships are portrayed well. How did you approach this?

"I looked at my own experiences, the experiences of people I know, observed a lot of things, and of course tried to get inspiration from a lot of films. The film follows a traditional style. At the same time, I try to transform and bend that style, but it's clearly based on a traditional style. It uses the language of cinema. But it seems impossible to answer all the questions about where each element comes from and how it came out."

Q. So whose cinematic language exactly is it that you are talking about?

"The directors I was conscious of when making this film were Mike Leigh and Nicolas Roeg. In terms of films, there was 'Rosemary's Baby.' I love 'The Exorcist,' but I didn't particularly have them in mind when making this one. I also thought a lot about 'Psycho.' The incident that occurs in the first 30 minutes of this film is similar to the shower room scene in 'Psycho.' That scene has been used in many films since. The bedroom scenes in 'Psycho' are still used in melodramas to this day."

Q. Do you want to continue making horror or go back to the genre of your previous scripts?

"The film I'm currently working on is a horror film. I like horror, but I'm thinking I might take a break from horror for a while after that."

PRODUCTION NOTES 1

Contains spoilers.
Please be sure to read this after watching the main feature.

The genius director's feature film debut

This is Ari Aster's feature film debut, who wrote and directed the film. The story of a family fighting against evil forces that try to force the continuation of their bloodline is inspired by Aster's own experience of a long history of misfortune that was like a curse. However, this experience also gave birth to a genius director whose work is meticulous and masterful. Aster's delicate technique and imagination have earned this striking debut film acclaim alongside the great horror films of the 1960s and 1970s.

With the help of cinematographer Paweł Pogorzielski, a fellow classmate at the American Film Institute, and other talented artists on the production design, Aster was able to show his talents in the opening seconds of the film. A graceful, flowing dolly shot seamlessly blends two separate worlds into one: the intricately detailed miniature world created by Steve Newbern (special effects director of Inception (2010), The Dark Knight Rises (2012)), and the human world of the Graham family, built from scratch by the crew on a Utah soundstage. "This film is about people who have no control," Aster says. "The Grahams are like puppets in a sinister dollhouse, controlled by outside forces."

Featuring an all-star cast including Toni Collette, Gabriel Byrne, Alex Wolff, Milly Shapiro and Ann Dowd, plus a memorable score by avant-garde saxophonist Colin Stetson, this is the explosive debut from Ari Aster, who is beginning to shape his own era.

Family falling apart

Aster began developing the idea for the film after his family endured more than three years of hardship. "We went through so much that we felt like we were cursed. I always write from personal experience, but I also like genre films. I didn't want to overtly portray the suffering writing a script about my family, and then filtered it through the horror film genre, which allowed me to bring it all together. Horror requires a high level of catharsis. If you're making a film about the unfairness of life, horror is a genre that allows you to do that more than any other genre. It's a strange genre in which the unfairness of life is more or less celebrated."

Taking inspiration from dramas like Normal People (1980), The Ice Storm (1997) and In the Bedroom (2001), which deal with seemingly unrelated themes such as multi-generational family struggles with death, mental illness and psychological abuse, Aster pushed the film from a family tragedy story into the horror genre. He creatively combined these emotional dramas with the increasingly terrifying films of the 60s and 70s such as Rosemary's Baby (1968), The Red Shadow (1973) and Spin (1961). "At that time, sophisticated films with fascinating characters were in fashion," Aster says. He began writing the script and fleshed out the story of a literally cursed family, where a series of horrifying events are revealed to be part of a grand scheme.

As the story progresses, themes of inheritance and lineage emerge, which then become horror, making the film's title more and more ominous. "It's a film about family. You don't get to choose who your family is and what you inherit," Aster says. "It's about the horror that comes from circumstances you can't control. There's nothing more unsettling than the realization that there's that the Grahams have no power. By the end, it's hopeless and it all feels hollow," Aster says. "But I wanted to make a horror film that's big enough to keep you in danger and connect with you to the end. My hope is to make a film that will keep you sitting there for a long time, that will shake you to your core and make you realize that there's no escape."

A fate worse than death

At the beginning of the film, the Grahams seem like a normal American family stricken by grief. But after the loss of Ellen Lee, Annie's mother and the family's enigmatic matriarch, the Grahams try to cope. Annie joins a bereavement support group and learns more about her mother's life and legacy. It also reveals her feelings of isolation within the family...

"Annie had a lot of issues with her mother, but she never got to the bottom of them," Aster says. "Annie didn't know what Ellen had done, mainly because she didn't want to find out what her mother was doing. Her instincts told her there was something there, but she ignored it because she thought it would destroy her if she faced it."

In preparation for an impending exhibition of her work, Annie, an artist working from home, was easing her inner anxiety by expressing her life through art. Her miniatures and dollhouses represent the real-life Graham family's trials and tribulations, including Ellen's hospice care before her death. "She was creating miniatures, perfect little replicas of real places and situations she was in, to give her a sense of control over her life, her experiences and her memories, but it was an illusion," says Aster.

Annie's husband, Stephen (Gabriel Byrne), is a gentle man who spends long hours seeing clients at the suburban psychotherapy facility he runs. Their son, Peter (Alex Wolff), is a goalless high-schooler who stammers during discussions in his Greek classics class and hides with friends between classes to smoke marijuana. "Peter has no direction in life," says Aster. "He has no particular interests and no solid identity. A gloomy fate befalls him, and he is ultimately granted true purpose."

Their daughter, Charlie, is a special needs student who spends her time holed up in the family's treehouse, quietly building eerie totems out of animal carcasses and everyday objects. Charlie is deeply scarred, quiet, and socially anxious. But there's more to her than that. As the story unfolds, it begins to feel like the Graham family is being manipulated by some force outside the story.

Family Story

Aster's psychodramas, reminiscent of his short films and classic movies, have been highly praised at film festivals and on the Internet. In the silent film "Munchausen" (2013), a mother played by Bonnie Bedelia is troubled and guilt-ridden by her son's interference with his college-going and adulthood. "The Strange Thing About the Johnsons" (2011), which premiered at the New York Film Festival and garnered rave reviews before going viral online, is a 1950s-style family drama that tells the chilling story of an adult son's sexual abuse of his elderly father.

In both films, Aster takes familiar themes and tones themed on family customs and traditions, turning them into dark comedy or unbridled horror. Both are brilliantly plotted, and the pace, structure, and visual expression are all calculated, showing the work of a born filmmaker. Like this film, his work exposes the power dynamics within families in its own unpredictable way. "I've always been interested in the dynamics of power. There's nothing more sinister and worrying than being with your family," Aster says. Surprisingly, Aster was inspired by the work of director Mike Leigh. "Mike Leigh creates characters and relationships that are so vivid. You feel the lives of the characters in a way that you don't see in other directors' approaches. I showed his film 'Life Is Simple' (2002) to my staff and incorporated it into the script."

PRODUCTION NOTES 2

Real nightmare

After the introduction of the Graham family, the story gradually shifts to the creepy side. Annie meets Joan (Ann Dowd), a suburban housewife who confesses to her the recent loss of a loved one. She convinces Annie to participate in a séance, which sets up the horror later in the story. But as Aster often does in his work, he doesn't stick to one genre for long. The tightly constructed plot weaves scenes filled with horror and surprise that go beyond the norm, creating a never-ending stream of surprises.

"I wanted to do my own interpretation of Janet Leigh in the shower," Aster says, referring to Psycho (1960). In terms of tension and horror in the second half, this film takes an unexpected turn. Aster's debut story of family turmoil continues the theme of family anxiety and deception depicted in his earlier works Munchausen (13) and The Strange Thing About the Johnsons (11), and he has created a nightmare of family horror.

The horror is in the details

Hereditary began production in 2017, but Aster had already spent seven years developing detailed character settings and backgrounds before writing the script. He had also secured financing, selected locations, and designed a 75-page outline shot list to realize his unique vision before filming even began. Passionate about bringing his vision to life, Aster began contacting potential collaborators several years before the producers gave him the go-ahead. He contacted renowned saxophonist and composer Colin Stetson (known for his collaborations with Arcade Fire, Bon Iver, Tom Waits, TV on the Radio, etc.) and asked him to compose the music two years before production began. Aster began working with the film's key crew and collaborators months or even years before filming began, building a network of collaborators who would help him create his amazing vision. With no guarantee of when or how the film would be made, and despite being a relatively unknown, first-time director, he convinced many talented artists to be involved in his project early on.

During pre-production, Aster contacted Toronto-based visual effects specialist Steve Newbern, who worked on the miniatures for Team America: World Police (2004), whom he had been impressed with. Newbern specializes in makeup and special effects, and has recently worked on Suicide Squad (2016) and the TV series 12 Monkeys (2015-), now in its fourth season. In addition to designing the miniature modeling of Annie Graham's intricate decorations and content, he also created the special effects makeup and special effects miniature dolls that play an important role in several key scenes in the story.

Before Newbern built a miniature model that would match the full-scale replicas throughout the film, Aster and production designer Grace Yuen (Beach Rats, 2017; First Reformed, 2017) began work on blueprints and interior design for the Grahams house, a three-story, dark-wood, artisanal structure that is a character in the film, just like its inhabitants. Aster emphasizes that the Grahams didn't want to feel too foreboding. "We didn't want it to be a cliche, like a haunted mansion. We didn't want it to have creaky floors and weathered walls and gothic architecture. We tried to find a real house, but because the cuts had already been meticulously planned, it was impossible to film on location," Aster says. Inside Park City Studios, an exact replica of the Grahams house was built, including key rooms and hallways, as well as the treehouse that serves as the setting for the film's dramatic climax. While shooting in a studio was challenging, it also allowed Aster the flexibility to execute his vision on a manageable scale. "I needed a lot of space to do the things I designed," Aster recalled. "The hallways and rooms were wide, so I could do dolly shots and walk through doors. I wanted complete control over the shoot, without the limitations of shooting on location in an established building."

Casting of main characters

The first person to be cast in the lead role of Annie Graham was Oscar nominee and Emmy Award winner Toni Collette, who is well known around the world for her roles in Muriel's Wedding (1994) and the TV series United States of Tara (2009-). Ann Dowd, known for her character roles in Fantastic Four (2016), The Leftovers (2014-), was then cast as the talkative Joan, who is obsessed with the supernatural. She finished work on the series just a few weeks before winning an Emmy for her role as the cold, cruel Aunt Lydia in the Hulu drama The Handmaid's Tale (2017-).

Aster and casting director Jessica Kelley (Jackie (2016)) held auditions in New York for several young characters, including siblings Peter and Charlie Graham. When young hopeful Alex Wolf (Patriot's Day (2016), Jumanji: Welcome to the Jungle (2017)) auditioned for the role of Peter, he was immediately selected due to his enthusiasm and drive. Milly Shapiro, who won a Tony Award at age 10 for her lead role in the original Broadway cast of Matilda, impressed the casting team with her courage and her dedication to the challenging role.

The final person to be cast by Aster was Gabriel Byrne. Byrne has worked on a number of films, including "Casual Suspects" (1995) and "Miller's Crossing" (1990). The Golden Globe winner and two-time Emmy nominee for his role as Dr. Paul Weston in the HBO series "In Treatment" (2008) was the perfect fit for the role of psychotherapist Stephen Graham. "It was pretty surreal working with Gabriel, having watched Miller's Crossing countless times when I was 15," says Aster. "I don't know if you know this, but he's a huge film fan. We'd be talking in between shoots about Powell & Pressburger films and Polish films and stuff like that."

Music that stirs the soul

Adding to the film's tension is the music of Colin Stetson, a saxophonist and avant-garde composer who has recorded and toured with Arcade Fire, Bon Iver, TV on the Radio, and Tom Waits. He has written and composed music for several feature films, including 12 Years a Slave (2013), The World of Scarlet (2012), and The Reclaimer (2013). Aster, who used his music to inspire himself while developing the screenplay, contacted Colin early in the planning process and convinced him to join as a musician and composer, creating the film's dangerous, expansive, and complex sax-driven score.

"Colin's saxophone has a low, eerie quality to it. He's not just a saxophonist; he's mastered all sorts of specialized techniques: circular breathing, polyphony and percussion-like valve playing. I was listening to his solo albums, New History Warfare 2 and 3, while writing the script. For me, his music is inextricably linked to the film," Aster recalls.

E s s a y

Yuji Uno (Film and music journalist)

The reason why "Hereditary" was created:

The opening scene features some jaw-dropping visual tricks, and in the middle of the story, even though you know it's fiction on the screen, events occur that are hard to believe, and the story unfolds in an increasingly bizarre way as it approaches the end. After breaking out in a constant sweat throughout the 127-minute film, the first thing that filled my head was the mystery of "Who on earth is this director Ari Aster?"

It is a work by A24, an independent film production and distribution company that has made remarkable progress in both quality and quantity of works in just six years since its establishment in 2012. It is a blockbuster that recorded the highest opening performance ever for an A24 work. Based on this prior information, I first experienced this work with the mindset of "It must be a modern horror with some new ideas or a strong social theme," as is the case with many horror works produced and distributed by A24 (in other words, I had quite high expectations), but it was incredible. "Hereditary" is a genuine classic that will be engraved in the history of horror movies, and Ari Aster, who created such a masterpiece in his first feature film as a director and screenwriter, is probably the most important filmmaker who made his commercial debut in 2018.

Ari Aster was only 31 years old when "Hereditary" was released in the UK. He first attracted attention in 2011, when his first short film, "The Strange Thing About the Johnsons," was leaked online. The story of a black family 14 years ago and now, about 30 minutes long, depicts a father who is famous as a poet, his wife, and his son. The story is so unpleasant that I hesitate to write it here, without giving away any spoilers (the family's secret itself is revealed in the first few minutes), but the rumor that it is a "dangerous film" spread and it became a big buzz on the internet. The short film "Munchausen," about 16 minutes long, released in 2013, is actually a silent film. The title of this film, which depicts the twisted relationship between a mother and her son who is about to enter college, comes from Munchausen syndrome by proxy, a type of mental illness.

A masterpiece of mutant, orthodox horror

Three things become clear from those early directorial works. First, the filmmaker has devoted all his energy to depicting taboos that irritate the audience. Second, the taboos always occur within families, such as the relationship between father and son, or between mother and child. There is something like a strong and deep-rooted obsession there. Third, as can be seen from the fact that he tried his hand at silent films in his mid-20s, he had acquired extremely refined cinematic techniques from a very early stage. These artistic characteristics are fully inherited in this film, "Hereditary."

Alfred Hitchcock's Psycho (1960), Roman Polanski's Rosemary's Baby (1968), William Friedkin's The Exorcist (1973), and Richard Donner's The Omen (1978). When you think about it, many of the classic horror films all depict horrible or horrible events that occur within a family. In addition, the above three films, except for Psycho, also depict religious themes. This is probably due to the fact that the biggest taboo in Christian Western Europe, at least at the time, was the depiction of Christian "devils," evil cults, and esoteric religions.

The key is "family" and "religion." With that in mind, it makes sense that this film, "Hereditary," has been added to the latest page of the history of horror classics, like a sudden mutation. In an interview, Ari Aster defined horror films as follows: "There are two types of horror films. One is a film in which the characters are attacked by fear one after another, like a rollercoaster. The audience enjoys the film and forgets about it when they go home. The other is a film that gives the audience a more fundamental fear and tries to affect their lives on a serious level. It is the latter that I want to watch and make" (THE VERGE, Jun 7, 2018).

Following the huge success of "Hereditary," Ari Aster is currently working on his new film "Midsommar" with the same A24 company. Following "Hereditary," this film will also be a horror film, but while he insists that he doesn't necessarily intend to become a genre-bound director, he also said, "I still have 10 scripts that I've written that I want to make into films someday. They're all in different genres. But what they all have in common is that they're all on the dark side."

"Hereditary/Inheritance" Complete Analysis

Contains spoilers.
Please be sure to read this after watching the main feature.

Mari Kobayashi (Film critic / Film Director)

"The meaning of the title"

"Hereditary" is not a very familiar word, but it means "genetic," "ancestral," or "inheritance." It seems to refer to the family's hereditary "disease" mentioned in the film (Annie's father suffered from paranoid depression, and her brother Charles suffered from schizophrenia), but more than that, it refers to the "bloodline" of Queen Leigh, a worshipper of the devil (Paimon), who is the source of all evil in the film. It becomes clear in the play that Paimon, whom Leigh worships, seeks a man of Queen Leigh's "bloodline." For this reason, Peter, the eldest son of the Graham family, who inherited Leigh's bloodline, is targeted.

"Paimon & Charlie"

According to an interview with Variety, director Aster said, "Paimon has been inside of Charlie since she was born." This is supported by a statement made by Annie, played by Toni Collette, to Charlie in the film: "You never cried as a baby, not even when you were born." However, since Charlie is not male, Paimon cannot inhabit her body. As a result, she is no longer needed and dies. In the film, the devilish and outsider Charlie chops off the head of a dead bird with scissors. This is reminiscent of a similar scene in Michael Haneke's The White Ribbon, and director Ari Aster is an avowed fan of Haneke's.

"The clicker sound made by Charlie"

One of Charlie's quirks is the "clicking noise" she makes with her tongue in her mouth. This sound is used effectively to create the film's impressive sound trick and sonic horror. This represents Charlie's "unusual" characteristics, with Paimon lurking within, and when Peter makes this sound at the end of the film, it suggests that Paimon's control has begun.

"Why can't I be the father?"

If Paimon's host can be a man, why not Steve, the therapist's father played by Gabriel Byrne? You might think so, but Steve is Ellen's son-in-law and not of "bloodline," so he cannot play this role. In the past, Ellen tried to use Annie's brother Charles, who is of her blood, to summon Paymon, but failed. He committed suicide by hanging in his mother Ellen's room when he was 16 years old. He left a suicide note saying, "Mom was trying to invite something into me."

"Charlie's accident"

Charlie, who is rushing to the hospital, sticks her head out of the car window and crashes into a utility pole, meeting her tragic end. Was it really an accident? The answer is "no." The accident was a curse cast by Paimon's worshippers in order to free Paimon. Did you notice? The utility pole that Charlie crashes into is actually engraved with Paimon's crest. Later, Leigh and Annie are also beheaded, and it was the fate of all the women in the Graham family to be beheaded to be presented to Paimon.

"Paimon"

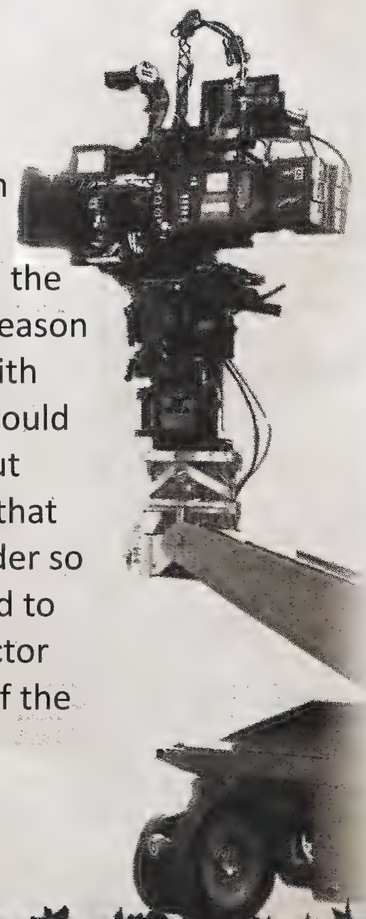
Paimon is not a fictional original character created for "Hereditary," but a demon that appears in European folklore from the 1700s. He appears in the grimoire "Lemegeton (Lesser Key of Solomon)" and Johann Weyer's "Pseudomonarchia Daemonum (The False Kingdom of Demons)." He ranks high in the hierarchy of hell, equivalent to the status of a king or duke. He is said to appear in this world wearing a crown. This gorgeous image is probably one of the reasons why Ellen and her followers worship Paimon.

"Miniature"

Along with the members of the Graham family, the "miniatures" and the "house" are two other important characters in this work. Annie is a diorama artist, and creates elaborate miniatures based on the daily as end-of-life care and a kindergarten). These works also reflect her delicate mental state, and after Ellen's death, her works take on a darker tone. A notable example is her recreation of Charlie's accident scene. The miniatures can also be interpreted as a metaphor for how the Graham family, like the family inside the miniature house, are manipulated by outside forces, such as Joan and the cult.

"House"

The house where the family lives, which is the main setting of the film, the interior of the house (first floor, second floor, attic, etc.), and the treehouse in the garden were all built from scratch for filming. The reason for this, according to the director in an interview with Bloody Disgusting.com, was that "by doing so, we could freely remove the walls and take wide shots without using 10mm or 15mm lenses. Another reason was that we wanted to make the hallways and doorways wider so we could move the dolly (camera dolly). We wanted to shoot as long (continuous) shots as possible." Director Aster was extremely particular about the footage of the house, "in pursuit of a dollhouse-like beauty."



"Naked people"

Some people may have thought, "Wow, it's like 'It Follows'" when they saw the creepy naked followers at the end, but from an occult point of view, the birthday suit is the best style. It is believed that clothing can hinder the flow of magical energy through the body. It seems that the formal attire when meeting Paimon is to be "naked".

"The creepy writing on the wall in Charlie's room"

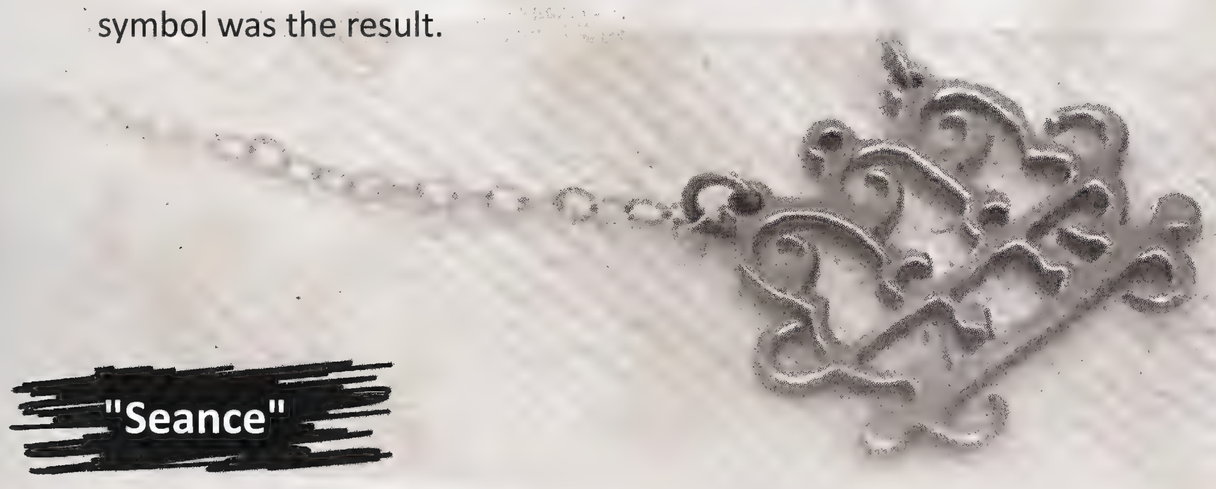
A magic spell likely written by Leigh to summon Paimon to the world. According to research by the website Signal Horizon, "Satony" is "a word used to communicate with the dead," and "Zasas" is the word used by the famous British occultist Aleister Crowley to summon the demon Choronzon. "Liftoach Pandemonium" is a combination of the ancient Hebrew word "Liftoach," meaning "to open," and "Pandemonium," meaning the den of demons or hell where Lucifer resides.

"Mysterious Light"

A mysterious light is seen everywhere, such as in the church during Leigh's funeral and in Charlie's school. The mystery of this light is never explained in the film, but it can be assumed that this is an energy (or something like it) emitted by Paimon that connects him to the Graham family.

"Necklace coat of arms"

This is, of course, the symbol of Paimon. Director Aster, who has thoroughly studied the occult, thought about "what symbolism could be used that is not a pentagram or an inverted cross?" in order to avoid a clear and obvious symbol. This devil-worshipping symbol was the result.

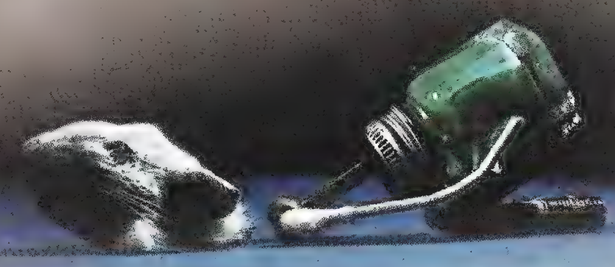


"Seance"

After experiencing a séance at Joan's house, Annie believes she can meet the dead Charlie, so she holds a séance at home late at night, with Steve and Peter in attendance. However, this is a trap set by Joan, and she ends up summoning Paimon, who was released from Charlie's body, during the family séance.

"The death of Peter, the coming of Paimon"

Peter is having lunch alone in the schoolyard when he hears Joan shouting from across the street. "I'm putting a spell on you. Leave your body!" Afterwards, Peter suddenly hits his head hard on a desk during class, frightened and gradually loses his sanity and soul. At the end, seeing his mother suddenly transform into a completely different person, Peter jumps out of the window at home, and a black soul leaves his body and a mysterious light enters his body. This must be the soul of Paimon.



"Two prostrating headless bodies"

One is the body of Ellen, who had been exhumed and removed from the cemetery by someone (a Paimon believer, obviously), and the other is the body of Annie, who had repeatedly smashed her head against the attic door and then decapitated herself with a string.

"Why didn't they target Peter from birth?"

As Annie says, when Peter was born, Ellen tried to manipulate everyone, so they made a non-interference rule and kept her son away from his mother. That's why Ellen couldn't lay hands on him. Later, after Charlie was born, Annie offered her to Ellen, but as Charlie recalls, Ellen told Charlie that she wanted her to be a boy.

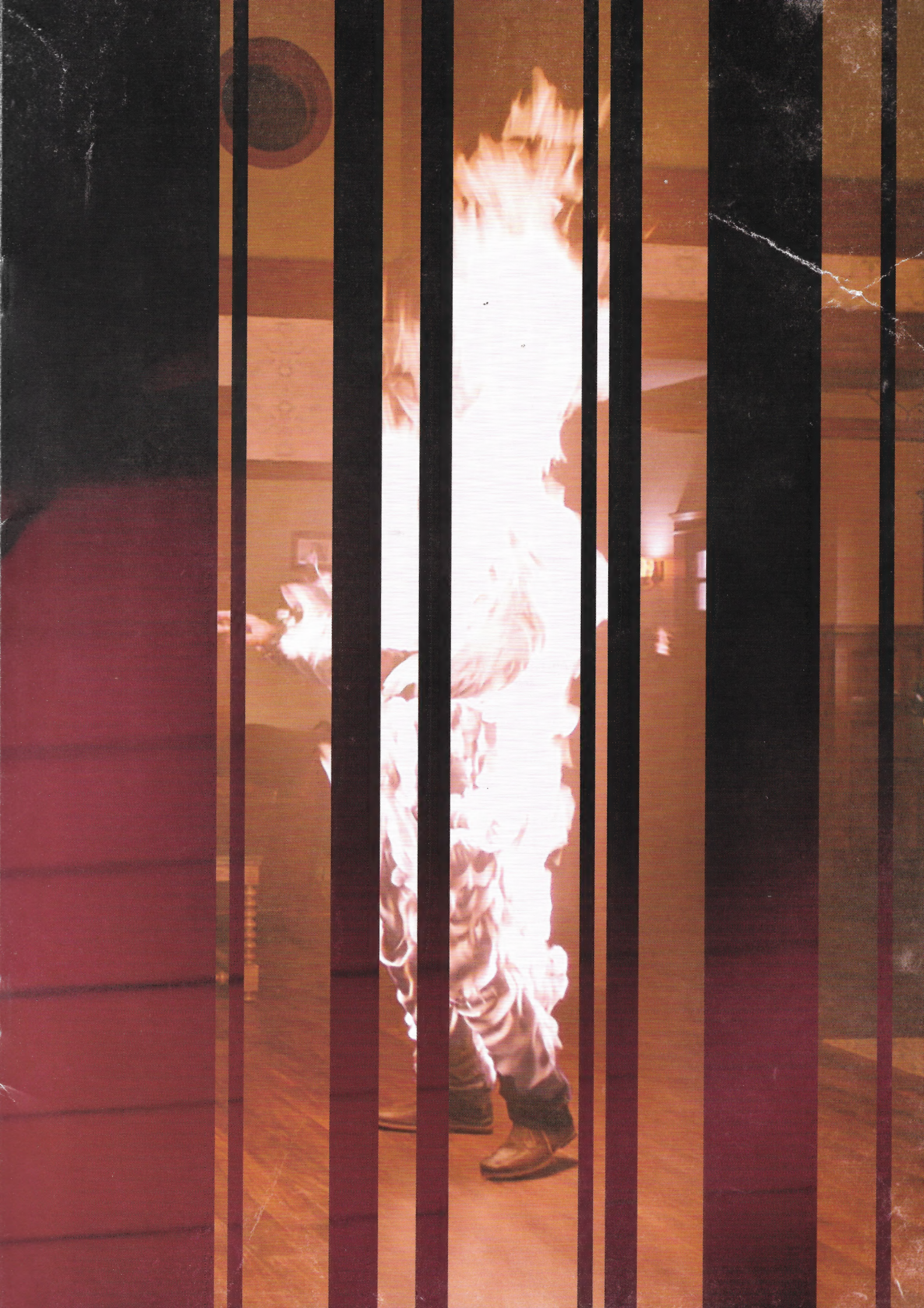
"Is Annie actually the scariest?"

Many people who watch "Hereditary" will nominate Annie as the most traumatic character. She has a number of terrifying, grotesque expressions and voices (screams, sobs). She loses her sanity and in the end displays monstrous behavior that transcends humanity (headbanging the attic door and crawling silently up the wall), making her the most terrifying character in the film. Toni Collette, who plays the role, is highly regarded by the American media as a "guaranteed Academy Award nominee," and if she does win, it will be her first nomination for Best Supporting Actress since her role in "The Sixth Sense" (which was also a ghost movie = horror).

"Successor to Hereditary"

When I watched this film at a packed late-night screening at the SXSW Film Festival in Texas in March this year, it reminded me of Rosemary's Baby, The Devil's Chase, and Carrie. Other than these, the director mentioned in the Q&A after the screening that he was inspired by Ken Loach's works, Mike Leigh's Secrets and Lies and Life Is Simple (Aster said, "Maybe my favorite director"), Todd Field's In the Bedroom, Ingmar Bergman's Cries and Whispers, Nicolas Roeg's Shade of the Red, Ang Lee's The Ice Storm and Ordinary People, and Japanese horror classics Ugetsu and Onibaba. This sense is not just that of a cinephile. In an interview with Time Out, Aster said, "During filming, I told the crew that this film is not a horror film, but a terrifying, nightmarish story of a family tragedy," and this is probably why this film is a carefully drawn, highly dramatic horror film.

With this hidden mystery in mind,
be sure to watch
"Hereditary/Inheritance"
again at the cinema.



CAST

Annie Graham	TONI COLLETTE
Steven Graham	GABRIEL BYRNE
Peter Graham	ALEX WOLFF
Charlie Graham	MILLY SHAPIRO
Joan	ANN DOWD

CREW

Director / Writer	ARI ASTER
Producer	KEVIN FRAKES
	LARS KNUDSEN
	BUDDY PATRICK
Director of Photography	PAWEL POGORZELSKI
Editor	JENNIFER LAME
	LUCIAN JOHNSTON
Composer	COLIN STETSON
Production Designer	GRACE YUN
Set Decorator	BRIAN LIVES
Costume Designer	OLGA MILL
Art Director	RICHARD OLSON
Miniature and Prosthetics	STEVE NEWBURN
Visual Effects Supervisor	ERAN DINUR
Compositing Supervisor	MANI TRUMP
Script Supervisor	BRIANNA WALL
	LEX HOGAN
Hair	ROCKETS “LORA” LAING
Makeup	GREG MOON
Location Manager	ANDREW HODGE
Casting Director	JESSICA KELLY
Post-Production Supervisor	JEFFREY PENMAN

キャスト

アニー・グラハム	トニ・コレット
スティーヴン・グラハム	ガブリエル・バーン
ピーター・グラハム	アレックス・ウォルフ
チャーリー・グラハム	ミリー・シャピロ
ジョーン	アン・ダウド

スタッフ

監督 / 脚本	アリ・アスター
プロデューサー	ケビン・フレイクス
	ラース・クヌードセン
	バディ・パトリック
撮影	パヴェウ・ポゴジェルスキ
編集	ジェニファー・レイム
	ルシアン・ジョンストン
音楽	コリン・ステットソン
美術	グレイス・ユン
セット・デコレーター	ブライアン・ライヴス
衣装デザイン	オルガ・ミル
アート・ディレクター	リチャード・オルソン
ミニチュア模型・特殊メイク	スティーブ・ニューバーン
視覚効果スーパーバイザー	エラン・ディアヌ
音楽スーパーバイザー	マニ・トランプ
脚本スーパーバイザー	ブレアナ・ウォール
	レックス・ホーガン
ヘアー	ロケッツ・“ローラ”・ライング
メイク	グレッグ・ムーン
ロケーション・マネージャー	アンドリュー・ホッジ
キャスティング・ディレクター	ジェシカ・ケリー
ポストプロダクション・スーパーバイザー	ジェフリー・ペンマン

Original title:HEREDITARY | 2018 | American movies | Vista size | Running time 127 minutes | Translated by: Mina Matsuura

© 2018 Hereditary Film Productions, LLC

PG12
保護者

Provided by: Phantom Films/Culture Publishers Distributor: Phantomfilm

Publication date: November 30, 2018 Edited and published by: Phantom Films TEL:03-6276-4035 〒151-0053 Yoyogi Community Building 3F, 1-11-2 Yoyogi, Shibuya-ku
Design: No Future Co., Ltd. Printing: Abe Printing

Price: 648 yen + tax *Reproduction without permission is prohibited

HEREDITARY